

# Agency Strategic Plan

## *Human Rights Council*

### Agency Mission, Vision, and Values

#### **Mission Statement:**

The mission of the Human Rights Council is to promote and preserve the human rights of individuals in the Commonwealth by raising the awareness of human rights, accepting complaints, and providing conflict resolution and mediation for the resolution of complaints.

#### **Agency Vision:**

We envision CHR as a nationally recognized equal employment opportunity and customer services agency that promotes fairness and equity when resolving complaints; is highly regarded for producing outstanding educational and outreach opportunities that prevent discrimination; uses strategic planning and technical training to provide the highest quality investigations and the protection of procedural and substantive due process rights; is trusted to exhibit the highest standard of competency in all aspects of its work and relationships; empowers and treats employees with fairness and respect creating a workplace that is customer driven and employee focused.

#### **Agency Values:**

- **Excellence**  
Excellence in our service to the public through professionalism, diligence, and dedication.
- **Empowerment**  
Empowerment of our employees through development, recognition, respect, access, and inclusion.
- **Ownership**  
Ownership of our performance through results, accountability, and quality work.
- **Commitment**  
Commitment to our mission through integrity, leadership and team work.

### Agency Executive Progress Report

#### **Current Service Performance**

CHR measures its service performance through performance measures and reporting requirements tied to goals and objectives.

CHR's first goal is to administer and enforce the Human Rights Act thoroughly, impartially, and in a timely manner.

~ The agency's first objective under this goal is to eliminate a backlog of cases that are in the intake and investigatory stages. CHR measures this activity based on the number of complaints received and processed for intake within 45 days of receipt. A backlog is determined during the investigative stage if a case is two years old from the date it was accepted. In 2004, the Council received a total of 273 complaints for review. The current service performance level dictates that a complaint should be accepted, referred, or administratively closed within 45 days.

~ The second objective is to process cases for investigation within one year of acceptance. CHR's ideal closure rate is to investigate a case within six months. In order to maintain the current federal contract and increase the number of federal cases that are closed, the Council works to close four federal cases per month.

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### **Productivity**

The number of cases that CHR receives and processes continues to increase. CHR has increased its services by providing mediations, training, public forums, and on-site investigations to a larger number of customers during the past two years. The number of citizens and businesses that have called CHR requesting assistance has also increased during the past two years. CHR has continued to add services to its outreach program to include internship programs. The Council serves any resident or group within the Commonwealth that needs assistance regarding discrimination.

~ The agency has provided more services with fewer employees and resources than in the past years using alternative methods to provide these services. Having an investigative staff of 1.5 makes it challenging for CHR to meet its goals and objectives. 1.5 investigators jeopardizes the federal contract by limiting the amount of federally generated revenue CHR can recoup from investigating federal cases.

~When a case has been unsuccessfully mediated, the half investigator has to investigate the case. This presents a challenge to the time it takes to process the case because the investigation adds additional responsibility to half investigator's workload.

~ In the future, CHR will continue to utilize its college internship program. This program brings 3rd and 4th year college students in to assist with the processing of cases. Additionally, CHR will continue to identify partnerships that will provide staff with training, additional resources, and information about best practices.

### **Major Initiatives and Related Progress**

The 2005 Human Rights Day Forum was successful. The forum highlighted the partnership between CHR and EEOC. The variety of individuals who attended the forum to include the business community, public and private employers, as well as, the non-profit community supported the theme of the forum which was "Building Partnerships, Embracing our Differences, and Creating One Virginia with one Future for All". It also supported EEOC's national chairman's vision of creating partnerships for the purpose of eliminating discrimination. CHR will continue to build upon the partnerships that were created as a result of this forum

### **Virginia Ranking and Trends**

N/A

### **Customer Trends and Coverage**

The Council is the only state agency that offers mediation and conciliation services to citizens that file employment complaints against private sector employers within the Commonwealth. CHR's mediation program is a voluntary program which began in 1995. Since its inception, eighty-five percent of the cases that have been mediated have been resolved. The mediation process has become a valuable tool used throughout the country to decrease the amount of time that it takes to investigate a case. CHR will continue to encourage complainants and respondents to take advantage of the mediation process.

### **Future Direction, Expectations, and Priorities**

CHR will continue to identify best practices and utilize the strategies identified in these best practices to resolve complaints in a more efficient manner. CHR will contact similarly situated agencies for the purpose of obtaining information about their intake and investigation processes.

### **Impediments**

CHR has a limited staff and for this reason, will continue to utilize the Council's college internship program, as well as, the City of Richmond's Youth Workforce program to meet the goals established by the agency.

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### Agency Background Information

#### Statutory Authority

The Virginia Council on Human Rights Act Chapter 39 empowers the Council to receive and investigate complaints of unlawful discriminatory practices based on race, religion, sex, age, national origin, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions in places of public accommodation, including educational institutions, and employment.

#### Anticipated Changes In Agency Customer Base:

The changing and increasingly complex nature of the employee/employer relationship - including the growing use of independent contractors, contingent work relationships, flexible work schedules and telecommuting arrangements - will have significant implications for CHR with respect to our enforcement activities and may pose new challenges to the successful implementation of the proactive strategies discussed in this Strategic Plan. We anticipate that CHR will receive an increase number of complaints from employees that fall under the scenarios outlined above.

The administration's focus on creating healthy Virginians means that citizens will live healthier, happier, and longer lives. For this reason, we anticipate a larger number of older workers seeking the services of CHR.

#### Agency Products and Services:

##### **Current Products and Services**

CHR investigates, mediates, conciliates and resolves discrimination complaints.

##### **Factors Impacting Agency Products and Services**

N/A

##### **Anticipated Changes in Agency Products and Services**

N/A

#### Agency Financial Resources Summary:

CHR's funding comes from general funds (92%) and federal funds (8%).

	<u>Fiscal Year 2007</u>		<u>Fiscal Year 2008</u>	
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund
<b>Base Budget</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Changes To Base</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>AGENCY TOTAL</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

#### Agency Human Resources Summary:

##### **Human Resources Overview**

As of July 1, 2004, the Virginia Council on Human Rights has an authorized level of 4. The office is located in Richmond. CHR uses role codes with three employees falling in the Human Resource Manager I category. Staff members work primarily within the office, but occasionally, if the need arises, will work from home.

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### Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Position Summary

Effective Date:	7/15/2005
Total Authorized Position level .....	4
Vacant Positions .....	0
Non-Classified (Filled).....	0
Full-Time Classified (Filled) .....	4
Part-Time Classified (Filled) .....	0
Faculty (Filled) .....	0
Wage .....	1
Contract Employees .....	0
Total Human Resource Level .....	5

### Factors Impacting Human Resources

CHR continues to experience human resource challenges. There is a strong need for two additional investigators. The current investigator has an open inventory of approximately 80 cases and a pending acceptance caseload of 25-30. The half investigator has five open cases that are being investigated and an intake backlog.

### Anticipated Changes in Human Resources

N/A

### Agency Information Technology Summary:

#### Current State / Issues

CHR's staff members have the necessary IT equipment to meet the agency's goals and objectives.

#### Factor Impacting Information Technology

Budget constraints.

#### Anticipated Changes / Desired State

N/A

#### Agency Information Technology Investments:

	<u>Cost-Fiscal Year 2007</u>		<u>Cost-Fiscal Year 2008</u>	
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund
Major IT Projects	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Non-Major IT Projects	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Major IT Procurements	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Non-Major IT Procurements	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

### Agency Capital Investments Summary:

#### Current State / Issues

N/A

#### Factors Impacting Capital Investments

#### Capital Investment Alignment

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### Agency Goals

#### **Goal #1:**

##### ***Proactive Prevention***

###### **Goal Summary and Alignment:**

The best way to combat discrimination in the Commonwealth is to prevent it from happening in the first place. We will work to proactively prevent discrimination by providing information and solutions to members of the public that will help them identify and solve problems before they escalate. We will seek to obtain best practices and reports that encourage learning and understanding among employers and employees. We will also introduce new and enhance our existing outreach activities, such as: the brown bag lunch series, human rights day forum, information dissemination through public radio and television and strengthening our partnerships and strategic alliances to strengthen efforts and build support. We will work to promote healthy workplace practices and provide information to managers in an effort to find the "cure" for discrimination.

###### **Statewide Goals Supported by Goal #1**

- Engage and inform citizens to ensure we serve their interests.

#### **Goal #2:**

##### ***Proficient Resolution***

###### **Goal Summary and Alignment:**

Providing quality services that are fair, prompt, and cost effective, is vital to the CHR's mission. We will ensure that our work is consistent, accurate and timely. The CHR will evaluate and improve every stage of the CHR's charge processes and will collaborate with federal and other state agencies in our effort to make the state complaint process more efficient. The CHR will also introduce new performance techniques to streamline procedures, while enhancing the integrity of our processes.

###### **Statewide Goals Supported by Goal #2**

- Engage and inform citizens to ensure we serve their interests.

#### **Goal #3:**

##### ***Promote and Expand Mediation/Alternative Dispute Resolution***

###### **Goal Summary and Alignment:**

Promoting and expanding mediation/ADR is a major focus for CHR. Our mediation/ADR program has demonstrated that disputes can be settled timely, amicably and cost-effectively through ADR techniques. We will continue to review the pool of private sector charges eligible for mediation and offer mediation at various stages of the private sector charge process.

CHR will also expand the use of ADR in our program by continuing to explore new and different ADR methods and identifying ADR methods that prove more efficient and cost effective.

###### **Statewide Goals Supported by Goal #3**

- Engage and inform citizens to ensure we serve their interests.

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### **Goal #4:**

#### ***CHR as a Model Workplace***

##### **Goal Summary and Alignment:**

The administration's focus on efficiency and effectiveness provides the roadmap for CHR's goal of establishing CHR as a model worksite. The implementation of the agency's strategic plan and other administration and agency initiatives will help build a model workplace where we can effectively and efficiently accomplish our goals in an environment conducive to good employment practices.

The very principles and standards we promote to employers should be apparent in our own operations. To achieve our goals, we will build an organization committed to providing opportunities for CHR employees to grow professionally. We will accomplish this through occupational and leadership development, performance management programs, the use of enabling technologies and a flexible, adaptable work environment that is conducive to teamwork. We will build a model workplace with programs and practices worthy of emulation.

##### **Statewide Goals Supported by Goal #4**

- Be recognized as the best-managed state in the nation.